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# OPINIONS AND DECLARATIONS RENDERED BY THE INTER- NATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

*Edited by*

**FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.**

Secretary to the Commission

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## OPINION 279

Rejection, as of the status of a generic name, of any term placed between the generic name and the specific name of a species in the zoological works of Linnaeus and Fabricius (J.C.) (*Opinion* supplementary to *Opinion* 124)



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# INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

## COMPOSITION AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF THE RULING GIVEN IN OPINION 279

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Dr. Norman R. STOLL (*Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A.*).

### C. Alternate Members of the Commission at the Session held in Paris in 1948

Professor Enrique BELTRÁN (*Instituto Mexicano de Recursos Naturales Renovables A.C., Mexico City, Mexico*).

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Professor Victor van STRAELEN (*Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique, Bruxelles, Belgium*).

Professor Robert L. USINGER (*University of California, Berkeley, California, U.S.A.*).

## OPINION 279

REJECTION, AS OF THE STATUS OF A SUBGENERIC  
NAME, OF ANY TERM PLACED BETWEEN THE  
GENERIC NAME AND THE SPECIFIC NAME  
OF A SPECIES IN THE ZOOLOGICAL  
WORKS OF LINNAEUS AND FABRICIUS  
(J.C.) (“ OPINION ” SUPPLEMENTARY  
TO “ OPINION ” 124)

**RULING** :—(1) Where in any zoological work either Linnaeus or Fabricius (J.C.) placed a term between the generic name and the specific name of a species, the intermediate term so employed is not to be treated as having acquired the status of a subgeneric name by reason of having been published in this manner.

(2) It is hereby directed that entries recording the foregoing decision are to be made in respect of Linnaeus (all works) and Fabricius (J.C.) (all works) both in the *Official List of Works Approved as Available in Zoological Nomenclature*, as Entries No. 9 and No. 10, and in the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Works in Zoological Nomenclature* as Entries No. 15 and No. 16.

### I.—THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On 9th February 1948, Mr. Francis Hemming, *Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature*, submitted the following application to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature asking that the Ruling given in *Opinion* 124 (1936, *Smithson. misc. Coll.* 73 (No. 8) : 1—2) that the terms placed between the generic names and the specific names of species by Linnaeus in 1758 in the Tenth Edition of the *Systema Naturae* are not to be treated as having acquired the status of subgeneric names by reason of having been so published, should

be extended to cover such intermediate terms as used (a) in any of the other zoological works of Linnaeus, and (b) in any of the works of Fabricius (J.C.) :—

**Proposed extension to all the works of Carolus Linnaeus and also to all the works of Johann Christian Fabricius of the decision given in the Commission's "Opinion" 124 directing that the terms used between the generic names and the trivial names of species by Linnaeus in 1758 in the Tenth Edition of the "Systema Naturae" are not to be accepted as being of subgeneric status as of that date**

By FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.  
(Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature)

While I was in Washington during my recent visit to the United States, Dr. Ashley B. Gurney (*United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, Division of Insect Identification*) drew my attention to the unsatisfactory nature of the Ruling given in the Commission's *Opinion* 124 (1936, *Smithson. misc. Coll.* 73 (No. 8) : 1—2), entitled "Linnaeus, 1758, Subdivisions of Genera". In that *Opinion* the Commission ruled that the terms which in certain instances in the Tenth Edition of the *Systema Naturae* Linnaeus had interposed between the generic name of a species and the specific trivial name of that species were not to be treated as having acquired the status of subgeneric names by reason of having been published in this way. Dr. Gurney was at a loss as to how this decision was to be interpreted : Was it a decision binding only as regards these intermediate terms as used by Linnaeus in 1758 or did it apply also to similar terms used in other works published by Linnaeus? Further, if the answer was that the Ruling given in *Opinion* 124 applied to all the works of Linnaeus, did it apply also to the exactly similar—and in many cases identical—intermediate terms used in the entomological works of Johann Christian Fabricius?

2. Dr. Gurney has undoubtedly drawn attention to a serious flaw in the Ruling given in *Opinion* 124, for, although that Ruling clarifies the position as regards the single book—the Tenth Edition of the *Systema Naturae* of Linnaeus—to which it expressly refers, the restrictive way in which it was drafted leaves it a matter for argument whether or not that Ruling applies to similar situations in other works by Linnaeus. Ever since *Opinion* 124 was rendered by the Commission, it has tacitly been assumed by systematists that the Ruling given in it applies to the whole of the zoological works of Linnaeus, since, if this were not the intention of that *Opinion*, the Ruling given in it would have contributed nothing towards the stabilisation of nomenclature and would indeed have caused unnecessary confusion, since, if it had been necessary to accept the terms in question as having the

status of subgeneric names as from the first occasion on which they were used after the publication of the Tenth Edition of the *Systema Naturae*, the result would almost certainly have been even more unsatisfactory than if these terms had been accepted as from the publication of that Edition, when at least these terms were used in a comprehensive manner. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that in *Opinion* 124 the emphasis placed on the date 1758 and therefore upon the Tenth Edition of the *Systema Naturae* is so marked that on any ordinary construction of the wording used in the Ruling given in that *Opinion*, the natural interpretation would be that for some reason not stated in the Ruling, the intention of the Commission was to limit that Ruling to the single case of the Tenth Edition of the *Systema Naturae*.

3. The defect in the Ruling given in *Opinion* 124 is similar in character to that in the Ruling given in *Opinion* 82, to which attention has been drawn by Professor H. Boschma (*Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, The Netherlands*) (File Z.N.(S.) 201). Professor Boschma has suggested that in this and similar cases where the Rulings given in *Opinions* already published do not cover the whole ground, an early opportunity should be taken by the Commission to repair the defects in question by rendering supplementary *Opinions* dealing with the matters left unsettled in the early *Opinions* concerned. I entirely agree with the view expressed by Professor Boschma in this matter, and I hope that supplementary action of this kind will be taken by the Commission at its forthcoming Session in Paris to complete the decision given in *Opinion* 124. It is my hope that the decision now to be taken will cover not only all the zoological works of Linnaeus but, in addition, also the entomological works of Fabricius (J.C.), whose use of terms intermediate between the generic names and the specific trivial names of species is indistinguishable from the use of such terms by Linnaeus. I recognise that, in addition to Linnaeus and Fabricius, a number of XVIIIth-century authors placed between the generic and specific names of species intermediate terms identical in character with those which it is now asked should be rejected. In so far as such usage is shown in the work concerned to be directly derivative either from Linnaeus or Fabricius, the terms in question would be covered by—and therefore rejected under—the Ruling now asked for. Where in other cases difficulties are encountered, it will be necessary for the specialists encountering these difficulties to make special application to the International Commission, for owing to the different methods of usage adopted by various authors, it would be extremely unsafe for the Commission to attempt to give a general Ruling in this matter without having before it a complete list of the works concerned, the compilation of which would clearly involve a great deal of bibliographical research. To carry out this would unduly delay the obtaining of a decision on the pressing question of the works of Linnaeus and Fabricius, if no action were to be taken by the Commission until a complete survey of the works of XVIIIth-century zoologists had been completed.

4. The proposal which I now submit to the International Commission is that it should render an *Opinion* supplementary to *Opinion* 124, directing that, where in any zoological work either Linnaeus or Fabricius (J.C.) placed a term between the generic name and the specific trivial name of a species, the intermediate term so employed is not to be treated as having acquired the status of a subgeneric name by reason of having been published in this manner.

## II.—THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE CASE

2. *Registration of the present application:* On receipt, the present application was at first given the Registered Number Z.N.(S.) 352, a File used at that time for miscellaneous matters which it was desired should be brought before the International Commission at the Session which it was about to hold in Paris during the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology. Later, it was judged more convenient to allot a separate Registered Number to the present case which was thereupon registered as Z.N.(S.) 394.

3. *Proposal submitted to the Commission in Paris in 1948 :* During the Paris Session of the International Commission the present problem was brought before the International Commission in a paper (I.C.(48)15) which was submitted by the Secretary on 23rd July 1948. In this paper, which later was published as part of the historical records of the International Commission during its Paris Session (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 3 : 114), the present subject was dealt with as follows under Point (61) :—

(61) “ *Opinion* ” 124 (*proposed extension of application*) : *Opinion* 124 states that under the *Règles* the various subdivisions of genera published by Linnaeus in 1758 are not to be accepted as of that date (1758) as of subgeneric value. It is desirable that it should be made clear that this decision carries with it a similar treatment of names given to subdivisions of genera by Linnaeus in all subsequent editions of the *Systema Naturae*. It implies also that names given to subdivisions of genera by Fabricius should be treated in the same way, for the method adopted by these two authors is identical. It is proposed that this should now be made clear.

## III.—THE DECISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

4. The present application was considered by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature at the Ninth Meeting of its Paris Session held at the Sorbonne in the Amphithéâtre Louis-Liard on Friday, 23rd July 1948 at 2030 hours. The following is an extract from the Official Record of the Proceedings of the International Commission, setting out the decision reached by it in this case at the foregoing meeting (Paris Session, 9th Meeting, Conclusion 40) (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **4** : 266—267) :—

THE COMMISSION agreed :—

- (1) that, where in any of his works (and not merely in the 10th edition of the *Systema Naturae*) Linnaeus, when citing the name of a species, placed an intermediate term or intermediate terms between the name of the genus and the trivial name of the species, an intermediate term so used was not to be treated as having thereby acquired the status of a subgeneric name as from the date of being so published ;
- (2) that the decision set out in (1) above applies also to intermediate terms placed between the generic name and the trivial name of a species by Fabricius (J.C.) in any of his works ;
- (3) to render an *Opinion* recording the decision specified in (1) and (2) above.

5. The decision taken in the present case was reported to, and approved by, the Section on Nomenclature of the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948, at its Second Meeting held on Monday, 26th July 1948 (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **5** : 74, 76).

6. The Ruling given in the present *Opinion* was concurred in by the sixteen (16) Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners present at the Paris Session of the International Commission, namely :—

Beltrán *vice* Cabrera ; Boschma ; Bradley ; di Caporiacco ; Hemming ; Hindle *vice* Jordan ; Jorge *vice* do Amaral ; Kirby *vice* Stoll ; Lemche *vice* Dymond ; Mansour *vice* Hankó ; Metcalf *vice* Peters ; Riley *vice* Calman ; Rode ; Spärck *vice* Mortensen ; van Straelen *vice* Richter ; Usinger *vice* Vokes.

7. The Ruling given in the present *Opinion* was dissented from by no Commissioner or Alternate Commissioner present at the Paris Session.

8. At its meeting held at Copenhagen in August 1953, the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology decided to insert a provision in the *Règles* establishing an " Official List " to be styled the *Official List of Works Approved for Zoological Nomenclature* and directing the insertion therein of the title of any work which the International Commission might either validate under its Plenary Powers or declare to be an available work, together with any supplementary decisions which the International Commission might take in regard to any aspect of the work in question (1953, *Copenhagen Decisions zool. Nomencl.* : 24). At the same time the Congress decided to insert a provision in the *Règles* establishing an " Official Index " to be styled the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Works in Zoological Nomenclature* and directing the insertion therein of the title of any work which the International Commission might either reject under its Plenary Powers or declare to be invalid for the purposes of zoological nomenclature (1953, *ibid.* : 23—24). Since the foregoing decisions apply to past, as well as to future, decisions by the International Commission in cases of this kind, the opportunity presented by the preparation of the present *Opinion* has been taken to give effect to the foregoing decisions by recording (a) the insertion in the foregoing *Official List* of particulars of the decision to reject, as not being subgeneric names, the terms placed by Linnaeus and Fabricius (J.C.) between the generic and specific names of species, and (b) the



insertion of particulars of the same decision in the *Official Index* referred to above.

9. At the time of the adoption of the Ruling given in the present *Opinion*, the expression prescribed for the second portion of the binomen which constitutes the scientific name of a species was the expression "trivial name". Under a decision taken by the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology, Copenhagen, 1953, the expression "specific name" was substituted for the expression "trivial name" (1953, *Copenhagen Decisions zool. Nomencl.* : 21). The changes in terminology so adopted have been incorporated in the Ruling given in the present *Opinion*.

10. The prescribed procedures were duly complied with by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in dealing with the present case, and the present *Opinion* is accordingly hereby rendered in the name of the said International Commission by the under-signed Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, in virtue of all and every the powers conferred upon him in that behalf.

11. The present *Opinion* shall be known as *Opinion Two Hundred and Seventy-Nine (279)* of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

DONE in London, this Twenty-Third day of January, Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Four.

*Secretary to the International Commission  
on Zoological Nomenclature*

**FRANCIS HEMMING**

